

JOIN US FOR “NO BULLY NOVEMBER”!

Bullying is Unacceptable

The playground bully has been around as long as children have been going to school. But as society has changed, and some would argue has become ill-mannered, bullying has become worse, in some cases involving serious threats and physical assaults. Regardless of severity, it causes emotional harm to victims and cannot be tolerated. It occurs so frequently because those who bully know that the chance of any serious consequence is small. That needs to change.

There are many warning signs that could indicate that someone is involved in bullying, either by bullying others or by being bullied. As a bus driver or attendant, you may be more likely to see some signs than others. For example, a parent would notice if a child is depressed and withdrawn at home, but you might be more likely to see how one child teases another while riding the bus or how a normally happy child you've seen often suddenly seems isolated and frightened. You may see changes in young people that you see every day or you may see patterns emerge over time. Bullying simply cannot be tolerated on a school bus; it is our jobs as educators to make our school buses bully-free zones.

Is your bus bully-free? Take the quiz below to test your knowledge and grade your bus.

1. Listed below are the four main types of bullying and examples of each.

- a. Physical - Hitting, kicking, inappropriate touching, sexual gestures, groping, threatening with/without a weapon.
- b. Verbal - Name calling, starting rumors, teasing, threats.
- c. Relational - Excluding others from the group, rolling of eyes, tossing of hair, ignoring and shunning, gossiping, spreading rumors, telling secrets, setting others up to look foolish, damaging friendships.
- d. Cyber - Use of e-mail, social network sites, cell phones, webcams, text messages, and Internet sites, etc., to embarrass or humiliate, verbally harass, socially exclude, or threaten physical or psychological harm.

How many types are you familiar with? Score: _____

2. How often do you see this kind of behavior on your bus?

- | | | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------|------------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------|
| a. Physical | 5 = Never | 4 = Occasionally | 3 = Sometimes | 2 = Frequently | 1 = Very often | a. _____ |
| b. Verbal | 5 = Never | 4 = Occasionally | 3 = Sometimes | 2 = Frequently | 1 = Very often | b. _____ |
| c. Relational | 5 = Never | 4 = Occasionally | 3 = Sometimes | 2 = Frequently | 1 = Very often | c. _____ |
| d. Cyber | 5 = Never | 4 = Occasionally | 3 = Sometimes | 2 = Frequently | 1 = Very often | d. _____ |

How often do you see these behaviors (add a,b, c & d)? Score: _____

3. Listed below are some possible signs of someone who is being bullied. Circle all that you have witnessed on your bus.

- a. Reports losing items such as books, electronics, clothing, or jewelry
- b. Has unexplained injuries
- c. Complains frequently of headaches, stomach aches, or feeling sick
- d. Hurts themselves
- e. Loses interest in visiting or talking with friends
- f. Is afraid of going to/from school or other activities with peers
- g. Appears sad, moody, angry, anxious, or depressed
- h. Talks about suicide
- i. Feels helpless
- j. Suddenly has fewer friends
- k. Avoids certain places
- l. Acts differently than usual
- m. Wants to sit near the driver
- n. Wants to sit with the same “safe” student or group of students all of the time
- o. (behind them, in front of them or surrounded by them)
- p. Wants to sit on the inside seat—not the aisle seat

Now, cross them out if you recognized them as a symptom of bullying. How many circles are left? Score: ____

4. Listed below are some possible signs of someone who is bullying others. Circle all that you have witnessed on your bus.

- a. Becomes violent with others
- b. Gets into physical or verbal fights with others
- c. Gets in trouble a lot including being sent to the principal's office or detention
- d. Has extra money or new belongings that cannot be explained
- e. Is quick to blame others
- f. Will not accept responsibility for their actions
- g. Has friends who bully others
- h. Needs to win or be best at everything
- i. Tries to move near enough to the student being bullied to continue bullying—for example, the bullying student may move near enough so the student being bullied can hear remarks, be touched, or be bothered
- j. Vies for attention, talks loudly, waves at the driver in the mirror, or moves from seat to seat
- k. Watches the driver and changes seats to be near the student being bullied when the driver is at an intersection or watching the road

Now, cross them out if you addressed the situation when it occurred. How many circles are left? Score: ____

5. Listed below are some guidelines for maintaining a bully-free zone. Circle all that you do on your bus.

- a. Be positive and professional.
- b. Acknowledge responsible behavior.
- c. Use consequences calmly, consistently, and immediately.
- d. Provide continual supervision.
- e. Anticipate and think ahead.
- f. Be up-to-date on our school district's rules, regulations, and policies for dealing with bullying.
- g. Make sure all students understand a specific, easy-to-follow set of rules for entering, exiting, and riding the bus and why the rules are in place.
- h. Clearly establish your expectations for your students' behavior.
- i. Let students know that if something occurs about which they're concerned, they can quietly give you a note or communicate with you in some other way to let you know what's going on.
- j. Know who to talk to if you need help.

How many of these guidelines do you follow? Score: _____

6. Listed below are good practices for what to do after a bullying incident has occurred. Circle your all that you do on your bus.

- a. Check to see if the young person who was bullied need attention.
- b. Determine if you need to tell a waiting parent or caregiver, sibling, or other concerned adult if something has happened
- c. Determine if the child who did the bullying needs to be handed off or connected to school personnel, parent or caregiver, or other caring adult
- d. Ask yourself how you feel about what happened and your response to it
- e. Complete and submit a Bus Conduct Form on any bullying incidences that occur on your bus.
- f. Use referrals wisely and properly and follow these guidelines:
 - a. Fill them out completely and legibly.
 - b. Use referrals judiciously—never write up the whole bus!—and only after you have given appropriate verbal warning to the student.
 - c. Report only what you are certain occurred.
 - d. Avoid editorial comments ("Suzy is just like her brother! In fact, the whole family is a problem!").
 - e. Report what you observed as accurately and specifically as possible.
 - f. Briefly explain how the student's behavior was dangerous to himself or herself, or other students—stress the "S-word" (safety).
 - g. Write down the actual words a student said so that the principal and the parent understand exactly what happened.

How many of these practices do you follow? Score: _____

Final Score: _____

Add scores from questions #1, #2, #5 and #6, then subtract scores for questions #3 and #4 to determine your final score. Above 25 = My bus is a BULLY-FREE ZONE; 18-25 = BULLIES Beware; 10-17 = I'm keeping my eyes and ears open for BULLYING; Below 10 = My bus needs a NO BULLY boost. Great job.....Give yourself an "A" for taking the quiz!